

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 13th December 2011 – 12.00PM – 2.00PM

Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Cr Walker, Cr Steindl
Lisa Kermode, Stuart Holley, Peter Cluff,
Bruce Milles
Saskia von Fahland

APOLOGIES: Margaret Lane, Cr Wendy Cameron,

1. **CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 25/10/11 were accepted as a true and correct record (moved Bruce Milles, seconded Stuart Holley).

Stuart Holley stated that administrative support for minute taking will be available for future meetings.

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. ***Priority Coastal Project funding***

Council approved funding the priority coastal projects on Wednesday 16th November. Work has commenced with the aim of completing as many of these projects as possible by the end of the financial year, subject to weather, availability of contractors etc.

2. ***Environmental Ranger position***

Applications for this position closed on November 27th and are currently being assessed.

3. ***Land Acquisition fund***

The Committee discussed the land acquisition policy and the possibility of increasing the funding cap to \$3 million. This will be discussed at the February meeting.

Bruce Milles outlined reasons why it is difficult to assign special value to land and suggested that the term 'fair market value' is limiting the valuation process and consideration should be given to broadening this description to include environmental values or similar. Bruce also suggested that consideration should be given to compulsory acquisition in some circumstances.

An update was provided on the potential Blacks Beach land purchase. A revaluation is currently being prepared to take into account the current market value and the value base on environmental significance. It was noted that the Land Acquisition Policy is the basis for Council decision making and council can ultimately decide the price it is willing to pay for land taking into consideration the policy and any related issues.

4. *East Point Development*

Stuart Holley will defer providing an update on the East Point development to the February meeting due to several people being absent.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Coasts and Communities project/coastal activities update

A detailed report on this item was received.

2. Land for Wildlife Program

A detailed report on this item was received.

3. Sarina and Mirani Special Projects allocation

Detailed reports on this item were received.

4. Update on the Natural Environment Plan

An update on the Natural Environment Plan was provided by Reef Catchments.

The draft chapters are available on the website and Reef Catchments staff will arrange a password for NEAC members to view the website in the New Year (by 31/1/12).

For each chapter, the top 10 activities will be featured, with project descriptions. Once projects have been undertaken, they will be able to be viewed in the list of completed projects, accessed via a map.

An outline was given on how the prioritisation for the waterways and wetlands, plains and ranges chapters was undertaken.

The next step is to make the draft website available for NEAC members to review and familiarise themselves with the content (will be available by 31/1/12) and for Reef Catchments to provide the list/description of proposed priority projects for the coasts, waterways, plains and wetlands chapters for NEAC for consideration at the February 2012 meeting as part of the budget discussions.

4. **FINANCIALS**

The financials up until end of November were circulated and discussed.

Lisa will enquire why the Mirani projects job number is showing \$25,000 committal rather than \$50,000.

The committee will consider the budget for 2012/13 at the February meeting.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Grant program

The possibility of funding unsuccessful projects from Reef Catchments Public Fund was discussed. It was decided to continue with Council's Community Projects Grants, with the possibility of linking with Reef Catchments in the future if the grants are undersubscribed.

2. Meeting dates for 2012

The following meeting dates for 2012 were set:

February 14th

April 3rd

June 5th

August 7th

October 2nd

December 4th

Meeting time to remain 12-2pm.

3. Signage project for Blue River Trail

The committee supported this project.

Meeting closed 1.50 pm

Next meeting February 14th, 12-2pm Council Chambers.

Actions arising from this meeting December 2011

Action: Stuart Holley to investigate the status of the East Point development and provide an update to the February meeting.

Action: Lisa to enquire about the committals for the Mirani projects.

Action: Committee to consider the 2012/13 budget at the February meeting

Action: Reef Catchments to provide access to the NEP website for committee members and present the priority ranges, plains and waterways projects at the February meeting

Actions arising from previous meetings

October 2011

Recommendation: That council further investigate opportunities to purchase the land at Blacks Beach Spit and keep the committee informed of progress.

June 2011

Action: Lisa to make the suggested changes to the Environment Levy brochure and present back to the committee for further comment.
In progress

Action: Committee to consider the Pest Management proposal at the August meeting.
To be considered by the committee